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ONESHOT
32P

ノスタルジア

NOSTALGIA

That day, I abandoned everything and left town—

Mom's warmness

The sunset I watched with my friends.

The summer we played in the pond.

FRIENDS, MOM, AND THE TOWN.

伊藤いと
Itoto fromYOU

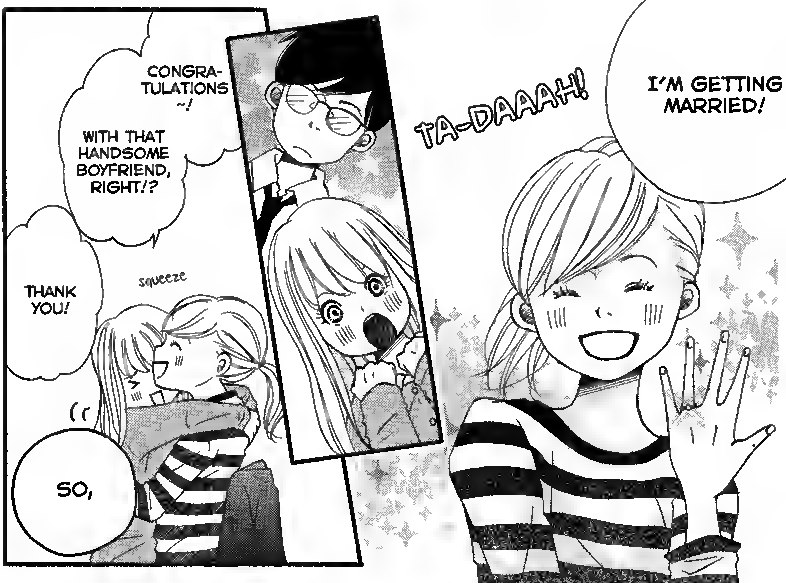
RIKA-CHAN!
WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU~!
JINPACHI
GOOD EVENING~
TOMOYO!
I'M SORRY THAT I'M LATE.
NO, IT'S ALRIGHT.
YOU'RE LATE.
TAKASHI!
Soooorry..
EHH~ NO IT HASN'T. WE SAW EACH OTHER A WHILE AGO IN TOKYO.
Here are your hand towels~
yum! BEER
One draft beer, please.
SOMEHOW, IT FEELS LIKE... IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

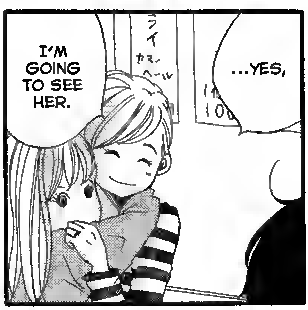
I WANT HERE...
WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER IN THIS TOWN FOR A LONG TIME.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I HAVEN'T BEEN HERE SINCE I LEFT THE HOUSE.
TAKASHI AND I ARE STILL LIVING IN THIS TOWN, BUT YOU'RE IN TOKYO.
AND...
WE USED TO DRINK HERE OFTEN,
TALKING ABOUT USELESS STILL TILL THE MORNING.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO TALKED ABOUT USELESS THINGS.
Here's your draft beer!!
YOU REALLY HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT! YOU ALWAYS LOOK DOWN ON US!
So what?
I ONLY SAID THE TRUTH.
WHAT!? WHY YOOOU!
RAGE!
CALM DOWN, LET'S HAVE OUR DRINKS FIRST.
AND SO... CHEERS TO OUR REUNION.

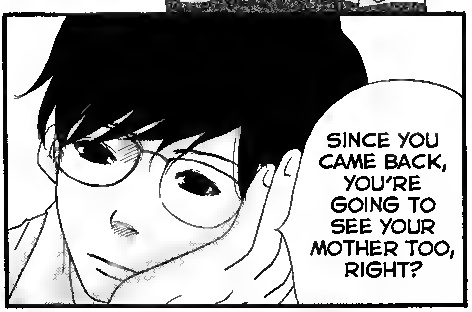
The three of us were born and raised in this town.
CHEERS!
We were friends before we were even aware of it.
We were always together. Middle School... High School...
We went to different universities, but we still saw each other often.
Until the winter when we were 24 years old.
RIKA... I HEARD YOU'RE HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH A MARRIED MAN?

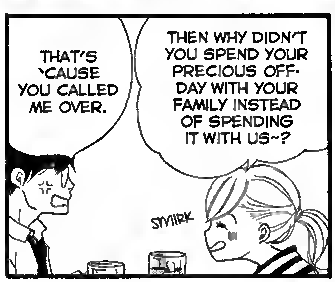
I GOT A PHONE CALL FROM A WOMAN NAMED OKURA.
SHE'S THE WIFE OF
THE PERSON YOU'RE HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH...
I PROMISED HER THAT
I WOULDN'T LET YOU SEE HIM ANYMORE.
IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
WHY DID YOU DO SUCH A SELFISH THING!?
I DON'T CARE, I'M NOT BREAKING UP WITH HIM!
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT A TERRIBLE THING IT IS TO DESTROY A FAMILY...
YOU'RE JUST COMPARING ME TO THE WOMAN WHO TOOK DAD AWAY!
I DON'T CARE! I DON'T CARE WHO MIGHT HAVE A GRUDGE ON ME! LEAVE ME ALONE!!
...OKAY.
IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LISTEN TO WHAT I SAY...

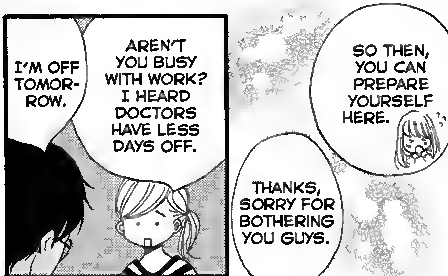
...FINE.
LEAVE THE HOUSE.
I quit my job and left the town.
I QUIT... BEING YOUR DAUGHTER.
That man soon left me, but being as stubborn as I was, I didn't go back home.
Since then,
I hadn't seen my mother for five years.
BUT, WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO COME BACK, RIKA-CHAN?
GASP!
...I


I'M GETTING MARRIED!
TA-DAAAH!
CONGRA-TULATIONS ~!
WITH THAT HANDSOME BOYFRIEND, RIGHT!?
squeeze
THANK YOU!
SO,


I'M GOING TO SEE HER.
...YES,


SINCE YOU CAME BACK, YOU'RE GOING TO SEE YOUR MOTHER TOO, RIGHT?


THAT'S 'CAUSE YOU CALLED ME OVER.
THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU SPEND YOUR PRECIOUS OFF-DAY WITH YOUR FAMILY INSTEAD OF SPENDING IT WITH US~?
SYUIRK

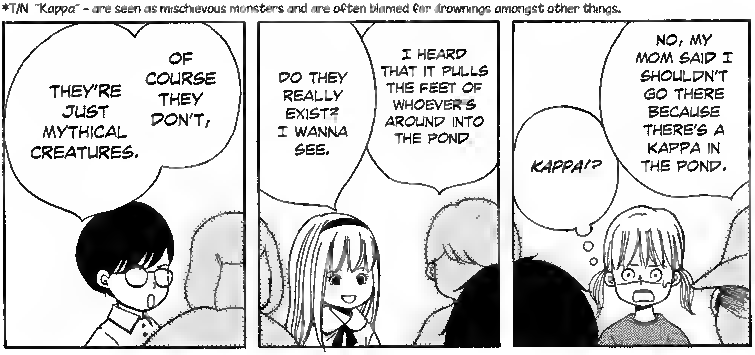

I'M OFF TOMOR-ROW.
AREN'T YOU BUSY WITH WORK? I HEARD DOCTORS HAVE LESS DAYS OFF.
SO THEN, YOU CAN PREPARE YOURSELF HERE.
THANKS, SORRY FOR BOTHERING YOU GUYS.

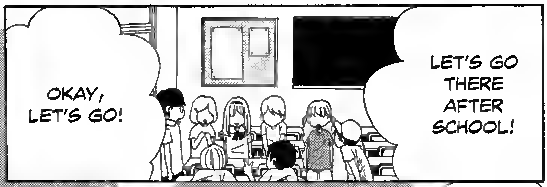
GOD, I KNEW YOU'D SAY THAT.
I ENVY YOUR SIMPLICITY.
DID YOU JUST CALL ME SIMPLE MINDED?
NOW, NOW YOU TWO.
Calm down
FORBIDDEN LOVE WITH A STUDENT...
YEAH, BUT MY CLUB ISN'T VERY ACTIVE, SO IT'S OKAY.
HOW ABOUT YOU, TOMOYO?
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS DOUBLE AS CLUB ADVISORS TOO, RIGHT?
Eheheh
SOMEHOW... "HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER", IT SOUNDS KIND OF LEWD.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT,
WHY DID WE BECOME BEST FRIENDS IN THE FIRST PLACE?
WHAT DID YOU SAY!?
YEAH, EXCEPT YOU.
AHH, WHY DID I BECOME FRIENDS WITH SUCH AN ARROGANT AND MEAN PERSON...
SO HOW ABOUT YOU, RIKA-CHAN? HOW'S IT GOING WITH YOUR WORK?
I MIGHT QUIT SINCE I'M GETTING MARRIED BUT I'M NOT SURE...
BUT WOW. I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT OUR JOBS. WE'RE REALLY GROWN UP.

*T/N: "Kappa" - a water spirit or deity found in Japanese folklore, typically told to scare children of dangers in the water.

KAPPA POND.
Can I have another glass of beer?
AH---!!!
I REMEMBER NOW! WE WERE STILL IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...
SURPRISE
THE SUMMER OF 3RD GRADE.
3-2
GUYS, HAVE YOU EVER GONE TO THE KAPPA POND AT THE HILL BEHIND THE SHRINE?

*T/N "Kappa" - are seen as mischevous monsters and are often blamed for drownings amongst other things.


THEY'RE JUST MYTHICAL CREATURES.
OF COURSE THEY DON'T,
DO THEY REALLY EXIST? I WANNA SEE.
I HEARD THAT IT PULLS THE FEET OF WHOEVER'S AROUND INTO THE POND.
KAPPA!?
NO, MY MOM SAID I SHOULDN'T GO THERE BECAUSE THERE'S A KAPPA IN THE POND.



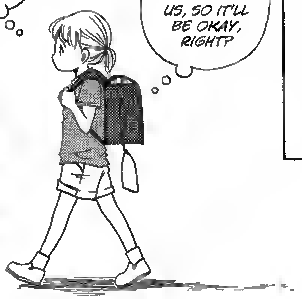
CHIRP

CHIRP

Mom worked hard every day

to raise my little brother, Kazuhiko, and I.

...WILL MOM WORRY ABOUT ME?



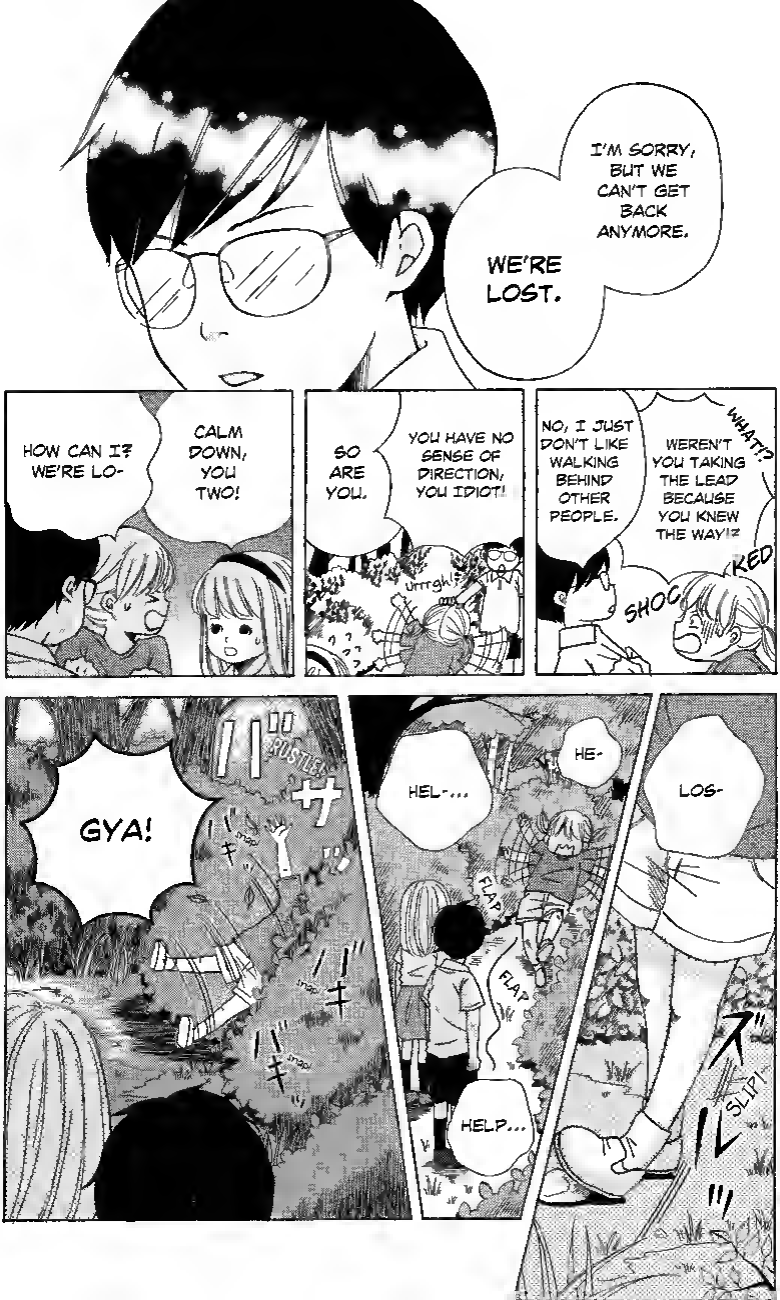
CHIRP

It was half a year after my dad had left home with his new lover.

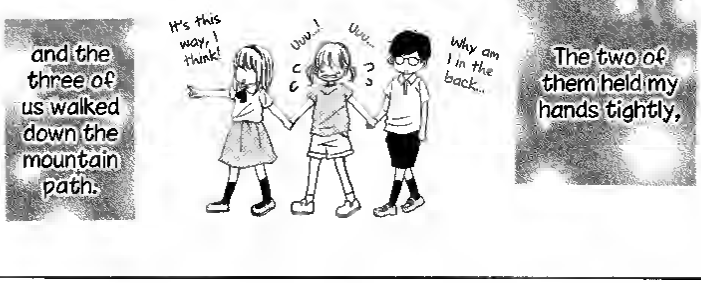
AH, RIKA-CHAN!
And I used to do dangerous things to attract my busy mother's attention.
I'M LATE..
BECAUSE I HAD TO TAKE CARE OF KAZUHIKO,
SORRY, I WAS LATE...
WAIT, THERE'S ONLY THE THREE OF US!?
We were the only ones that came.
Tomoyo, who's always calm and courageous.
Takashi, the realist.
And me, who'd pretend to be strong, but in reality is a scaredy-cat amongst the three of us.

...ARE YOU SCARED?
O-
EH!? WE'RE GOING!? JUST THE THREE OF US!?
OKAY, LET'S GO.
Mhmm!
OF COURSE NOT.
STOP, DON'T GO UP THERE BY YOURSELF!!
YOU... LISTEN!!!
EH!? BUT ISN'T IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO WALK UP THERE!?
WE HAVE TO TAKE THE ROUTE BEHIND THE SHRINE.

CAAW
CAAW
HEY...
ARE WE THERE YET? IT'S GETTING DARK...
SURE...
RIKA-CHAN, WANNA HOLD MY HAND?
.....
I DON'T KNOW WHY PEOPLE ARE SCARED OF THIS.
STEP
STEP
SHUT UP...
AND THE GHOSTS AND THOSE STUFFS THEY SEE ARE JUST ILLUSIONS
KEEP AWAY KIDS FROM DANGEROUS RIVER AND PONDS
KAPPA'S A MYTHICAL CREATURE ADULTS MADE TO
IT'S A WASTE OF ENERGY BEING SCARED OF SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T EXIST.
YES, YES, I SEE ..
He talks a lot!
Really


I'M SORRY, BUT WE CAN'T GET BACK ANYMORE.
WE'RE LOST.
HOW CAN I? WE'RE LO-
CALM DOWN, YOU TWO!
SO ARE YOU.
YOU HAVE NO SENSE OF DIRECTION, YOU IDIOT!
Urrrgh!
NO, I JUST DON'T LIKE WALKING BEHIND OTHER PEOPLE.
WEREN'T YOU TAKING THE LEAD BECAUSE YOU KNEW THE WAY!?
WHAT!?
SHOCKED
GYA!
RUSTLE
HEL-...
HE-
LOS-
FLAP
FLAP
HELP...
SLIP!

RIKA-CHAN!
Splash
HELP! HELLLP!
Splash
SPLASH!
!!
!!
MOM ...
MOM ...
I WAS SO SCARED..!
SO THIS IS WHERE THE KAPPA POND IS...
YOU OKAY?

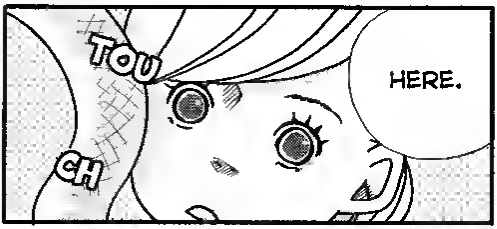

and the three of us walked down the mountain path.
It's this way, I think!
Uuu..!
Uuu..
Why am I in the back...
The two of them held my hands tightly,

I felt so relieved, that I started crying again.
One of the kids who didn't come had told to teachers about us, so there were parents and teachers waiting for us.
Well... who knows
Dad, kappas don't exist, right?
Mama, kappas exist, right?
It was almost sunset when we got back to the shrine.
AND SO...
WE'VE TOGETHER EVER SINCE.
KAPPAS... I THINK THEY EXIST.
YOU'RE 29 ALREADY, AND YOU STILL THINK THEY EXIST?
THEY DO!!
YOU THINK SO TOO, RIGHT, RIKA-CHAN?
UMM... I DON'T KNOW...

AH!
I THINK WE COULDN'T SEE THEM BECAUSE WE DIDN'T BRING ANYTHING...!
HOW ABOUT WE BRING ITS FAVORITE-- A CUCUMBER, AND THEN GO UP THERE AGAIN?
FINE, BUT YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THAT THEY DON'T EXIST,
IF YOU DON'T SEE THEM THIS TIME. OKAY?
OKAY!
W-WAIT, BUT IT'S 5 A.M.!
PONT
IT'S STILL DARK THERE IN THE FOREST!
SORRY, YOU GUYS, I WANT TO CLOSE UP FOR THE NOW.
LET'S GO.
WAI-...
EEEEEEEEEK

HERE'S THE ENTRANCE.
THAT GUY...
GEEZ, HE'S ALREADY OVER THERE...
IT'S OKAY, IT'S ALMOST SUNRISE.
THE STORE OWNER WAS SO NICE.
HE GAVE US A CUCUMBER FOR FREE
YEAH... BUT, IT'S STILL DARK HERE.
WE HAD TO CLIMB UP HERE, RIGHT?
WHA-!? HERE!?
BUT IT'S SO DARK! WE CAN'T SEE ANYTHING!
I'M ALWAYS CALM.
WHY ARE YOU SO CALM...
WHAT WAS THAT!?
THE BIRDS.
COOH!
COOH!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

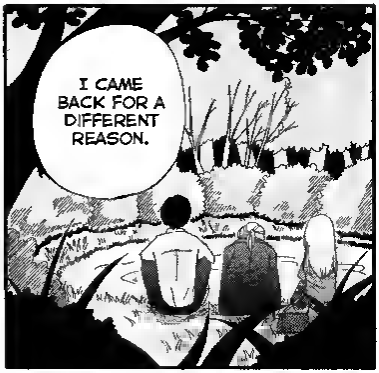
It's so dark in the forest.
ALL RIGHT.
If we're not careful for a second,
we'll lose our way.
Ah..... It's like...
my lost feelings...
SIS',
DON'T BE STUBBORN AND COME SEE MOM.
HOW CAN YOU BE SO COLD-HEARTED?
YOU THINK YOU'VE QUIT BEING HER DAUGHTER, BUT...
SHE HASN'T QUIT BEING YOUR MOTHER.
SHE WORKED HARD FOR US AND EVEN GOT US INTO UNIVERSITY...



*PR/N: Snake Sloth = the shedded skin of a snake

GYA!
slip...!
SPLAAASH!
IT'S THE SECOND TIME...
that you've fallen in there.
IT'S NOT THAT DEEP ...
HELP ME!
BUT WE FOUND IT AGAIN!
HELP ME GET UP!
..IT'S COLD! I-IT'S INSANELY C-COLD!
Let's dry off your jacket first!
Of course it is
That summer,

But they kept holding my hands until I met my mom.
when I fell in the pond, I suddenly missed my mom and
cried... I cried a lot.
RIKA!!
When she hugged me tightly, I felt like...
Ahhh, this is what I wanted.
It's been 20 years since then.
I've become 29 years old, but...
I haven't changed a bit.
This is why I went into the forest even though I was scared.


I CAME BACK FOR A DIFFERENT REASON.

"LEAVE THIS HOUSE."

I haven't gone home in 5 years and I've been worrying my mom.
TO BE HONEST,

23

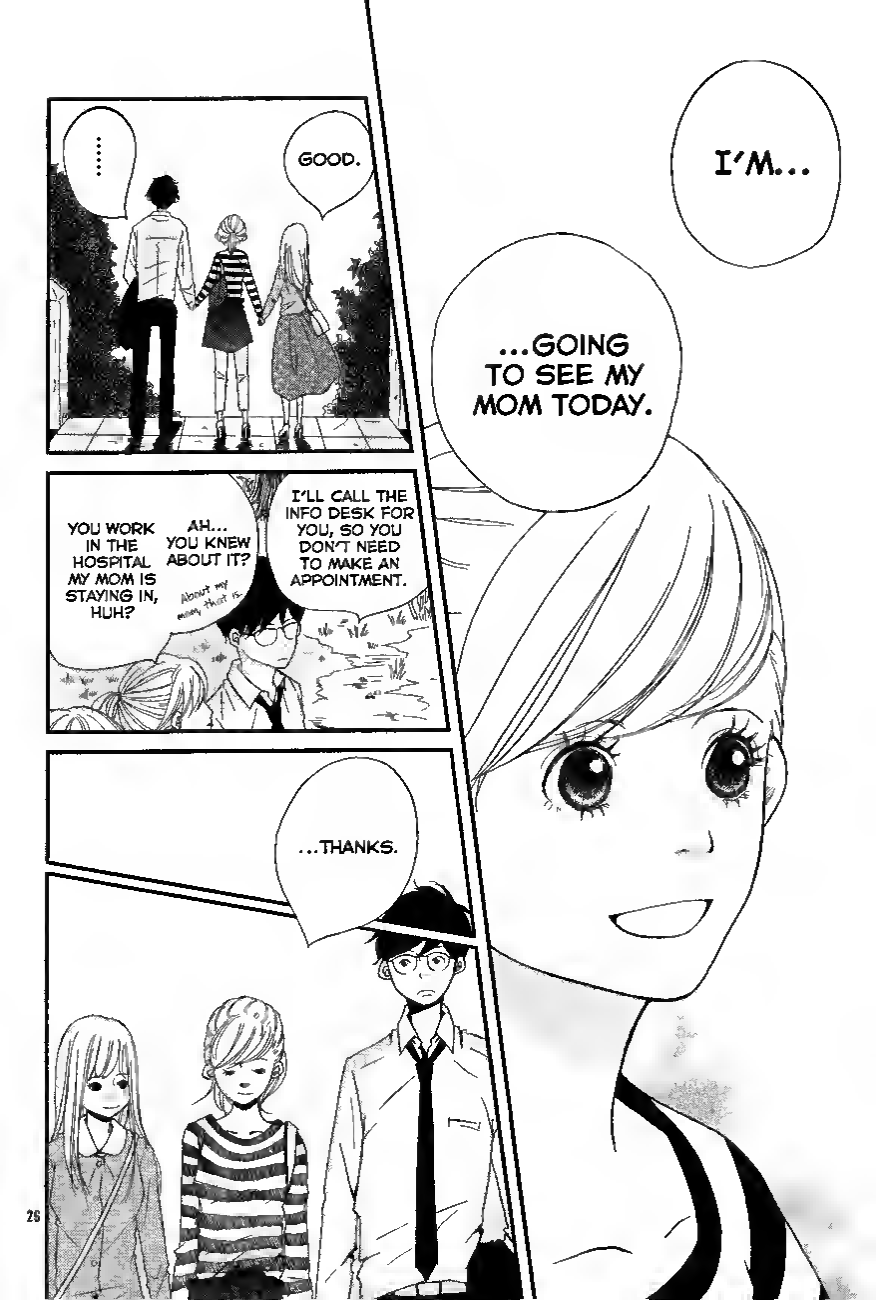
MY MOM... HER ILLNESS IS GETTING WORSE.

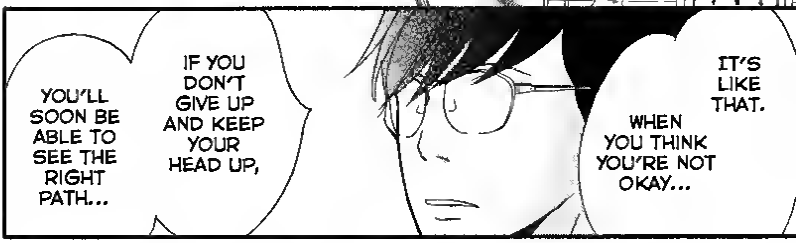
I WENT TO THE HOSPITAL,
BUT I COULDN'T FACE HER, SO I RAN AWAY.
AND I CALLED YOU GUYS INSTEAD.

THERE MAY NOT BE MUCH TIME LEFT...

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO...
IF MY MOM DIES...
It was me who was just worrying her to see if she cared about me.
It wasn't Mom who prevented me from coming back.
But still...
I WANT TO SEE HER.

That's for sure.
LOOK, IT'S THE SUNRISE!
IT REALLY IS! IT LOOKS BRIGHTER THAN THE USUAL, SINCE WE'VE BEEN IN THE FOREST ALL NIGHT~!

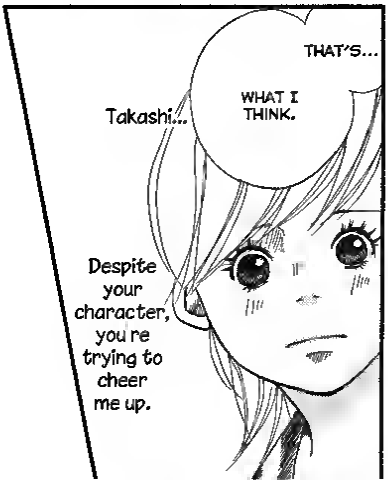

I'M...
...GOING TO SEE MY MOM TODAY.
GOOD.
.....
I'LL CALL THE INFO DESK FOR YOU, SO YOU DON'T NEED TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT.
AH... YOU KNEW ABOUT IT?
About my mom, that is.
YOU WORK IN THE HOSPITAL MY MOM IS STAYING IN, HUH?
...THANKS.



But yes, that's right.

People should keep their head up and continue walking in the dark,

and then the sun will finally rise again. And...



I'll understand the
sun's brightness.

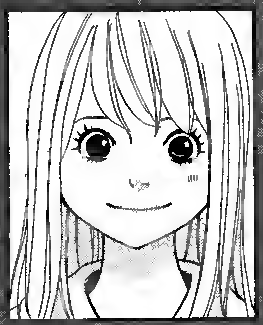
I EVEN HAVE FRIENDS WHO'LL HELP ME STAND UP WHEN I FALL!
RIGHT!
I told you, they don't.
and what's with calling it "sama"
That's so random...
I THINK KAPPA-SAMA DOES EXIST!
HEY!
!

IT GOT US SOAKED IN THE WATER, WHICH ENDED UP TYING US CLOSE TOGETHER.
I THINK THAT...
Right?
Mhmm!
Well... If you say it like that...

Later, they told me that...

Takashi and his wife have been separated for a long time,

and Tomoyo had unforgivable crush on her student.



They didn't tell me anything because I was crying, but...

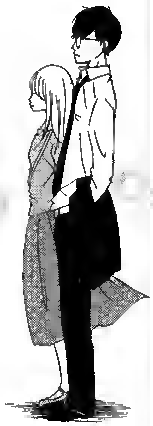
at that time.

Mom,

wait for me, I'm coming now.

I'll express all of the apologies and thanksgiving that...

I've been piling up for 29 years.



Thank you, you two.

YUP, I WILL.

THANK YOU.

Thanks for giving me a path to go back on.

...we were all struggling in the same darkness.
HM?
HEY, TAKASHI.
SOMETHING TOOK THE CUCUMBER FROM MY HAND.
WHEN I WAS SITTING NEAR THE POND,
I DIDN'T MENTION IT BEFORE, SINCE I DIDN'T WANT TO SCARE RIKA-CHAN, BUT...
SPLASH!
I'M SURE.
IT WAS KAPPA-SAMA,
THE END